

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Smoothing that uses pieces of color information of at least one color component of a target pixel and of pixels adjacent to the target pixel among a plurality of pixels that form image data is performed selectively for at least one color component of the target pixel. The smoothing is in accordance with correlation between the target pixel and pixels in the vicinity of the target pixel. Since the entire image data is not smoothed uniformly, the smoothing can be performed so as to leave structures inherent to the original image.